

International Conference on Media and Society

‘Citizen, Connectivity and Control: Democratisation in the 21st Century’

Title

Framing a ‘lone-wolf’ attack: CNN online news treatment on Norway massacre and Sydney hostage crisis

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Abstract

Since the terrorist attack on American soil in September 11, 2001, Western news media has been accused of being hostile toward Arabs and Muslim’s world in general. Repeated themes developed around Muslim’s acts of terrorism in Western media were seen as the fuel that perpetuated the idea of Muslim culture being barbaric, uncivilized and backward in the mind of the Western society. While the argument is true (on some level) when the act were carried out by terrorist group such as Al-Qaeda, little is known on how media would react to such heinous attacks if it were perpetrated by a single individual or a ‘lone wolf’ attacker who hold different religious background. A total of 214 headlines on Norway massacre and Sydney hostage crisis that were published on CNN website were analyzed and it was found that there was a distinct treatment given to both cases. The findings reaffirmed Powell (2011) model of terrorism coverage whereby the Muslim easily became the immediate suspect in the wake of terrorism event. Apart from that, there were also differences in the description of the suspects in which the